



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

GOVERNOR TERRY MCAULIFFE'S TASK FORCE ON
COMBATING CAMPUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE
CHAIR ATTORNEY GENERAL MARK HERRING

DECEMBER 15, 2014
OFFICES OF THE VIRGINIA SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION ALLIANCE
RICHMOND, VA

PREVENTION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT-to be formally approved at the next 2015 subcommittee
meeting

Members Present: Emily Renda (Subcommittee Chair), Fran Bradford, Dr Ángel Cabrera, Dr Leah Cox, Brandon Day, Dr Dorothy Edwards, Tom Kramer, Christopher Ndiritu, Dr Frank Shushok, Jr., Kristi VanAudenhove

Staff Present: Secretary of Education- the Honorable Anne Holton, Deputy Secretary of Education Dr. Dietra Trent, Lisa Furr, Kay Heidbreder, and Mary Vail Ware

Meeting Summary:

Subcommittee Chair Emily Renda called the meeting to order at 9:20 am.

The minutes from the November 11th meeting were distributed electronically. Dr Ángel Cabrera moved that the minutes be approved as sent and Dr Fran Shushok seconded the motion. The motion passed by acclamation.

Emily Renda detailed the agenda for the day beginning with a discussion of the presentations heard at the last meeting. She suggested beginning by looking at campus climate surveys and bystander prevention as key points to dig into the prevention models. Dr Cabrera asked if the group should spend a few moments discussing the recent articles and situation in the media. He asked if any action needed to be taken in light of this information. The committee agreed to discuss the situation. Emily Renda said she'd start since there was focus on her campus. Ms. Renda pointed out that what is said and what is heard are different particularly by those experiencing trauma. The big take away is that there is a need for prevention/ survivor/ peer support training for students in distress for multiple issues like eating disorders, etc. as well as sexual assault.

Dr. Shushok pointed out that there will be legislative issues in the coming General Assembly with respect to campus sexual assault. There are multiple arguments for different legislation and what is the role of the committee? Ms. Renda reported that there are already bills filed on mandatory police reporting which is a complex issue.

Dr. Dorothy Edwards reminded the group that our role is to focus on prevention; the response issues are being handled by the other two subcommittees. There is no controversy about stopping rape before it happens.

GMU President Ángel Cabrera shared that campus presidents in their meetings had talked about suspending fraternities. He asked- What is the right approach with fraternities and intercollegiate athletics other than “barred until we decide what to do with them”? George Mason is trying to work with those groups to address the issues. Dr. Edwards commented that the challenge of prevention in general is a branding issue: The challenge is to re-engage people without the message that “men are bad perpetrators”. Fraternities and athletics need to be involved. Their members are no more likely to be perpetrators than those in the general population. Dr. Edwards added that like in military environments, hazing and other behaviors create a group mentality encouraging solidarity in the group. Mandatory training would have already solved the problem if it could have. Most of these individuals (Greek life and athletics) are allies and it is important to reconnect to that fact. Ms. Renda suggested the approach should be to identify sub groups and engage group- specific approaches as a strategy for outreach. She added that there is data demonstrating the relationship between hazing and an increase in sexual violence as well as other types of violence and reduction of empathy.

Dr. Cabrera shared how eye opening the committee’s first meeting was for him especially Dorothy Edward’s presentation: the idea of viewing everyone as a good guy and not a perpetrator was helpful. Bystanders are there for the right reasons. Fraternities can also be victimized by those who hijack them to perpetrate and assault victims.

Fran Bradford let us know that the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) is creating model policies on hazing. There are many trainings on this topic. Kristi Van Audenhove shared the frustration that perpetrators are learning from our prevention strategies and changing their tactics. She expressed concern that the continuum of unhealthy behaviors is wide and all unhealthy sexual behaviors need to be addressed. There is a wider issue of sexual violence on campuses and the committee is responsible for all of it not just gang rapes and high risk issues. Ms. Renda agreed we need to look at the abusive behaviors and predators as well as unhealthy sexual behaviors.

Dr. Edwards expressed the idea that more reporting would solve sexual violence is difficult concept to prove. While increased reporting does increase accountability, the whole community needs accountability and mobilization. Anger changed to conversation and talking will consistently increase reports to law enforcement. The focus should be to change from the hateful (men are bad rapists) to mainstream conversations about prevention. It is our responsibility to understand why victims are not reporting more.

Kay Heidbreder suggested a discussion of drinking and drugs on campuses, which can create an atmosphere for bad behaviors encountered with sexual assault.

Dr. Shushok suggested that the answer may lie in the long term gender deconstruction. The perception that “this is what men do” and “this is what women do” fuels the kind of assaults that seen in dating scenarios. The prevention conversation needs to be looked at dislodge preconceived notions.

Ms. Renda asked if the gender role issue could be considered with K-12 prevention. The social norming approach with sexual assault and alcohol and what college students do and don’t do and take that to middle schools. It may be hard to mandate in lower grades. Ms. Bradford related that we need to say something about K-12 but the issue may be beyond this group’s expertise. Dr Leah Cox spoke of the good job that has been done on K-12 anti-bullying efforts and that we could recommend expanding on that by adding messages about healthy relationships, sexual assaults, and rape.

Ángel Cabrera pushed the committee back to thinking about outcomes. He suggested we take the White House’s Campus Sexual Violence Report recommendations of campus climate surveys and bystander intervention and the White House’s kit for how to implement these items. The subcommittee should look at the framework to determine what works and ask the question if we support the White House Report? Can campuses come together on climate surveys and share reports or should we suggest that everyone do their own? Bystander intervention is detailed in the White House report and through the CDC~ should we recommend a statewide campaign or encourage each campus to do their own? There is much detail regarding these items already available.

Dr. Trent told the committee that in January the Governor would be calling the student body presidents and the heads of the Greek organizations and other student leaders to discuss a Virginia campaign to change campus culture.

Ms. Bradford suggested that in answer to Dr. Cabrera's questions: "yes to both". There needs to be a climate survey that has same questions and then a section where individual campuses can create their own questions unique to their environment. Ms. Renda wants to encourage campuses to collect data that can be used for targeted prevention and social norming activities. Mandates for surveys are probably coming from the federal side in the future. Ms. Bradford shared that many campuses already have a survey.

Dr. Cabrera suggested the sub-committee offer fewer recommendations that will be more powerful. He likes the idea of the survey with suggested questions from the group.

Dr. Trent let the committee know that there are already several pieces of legislation with respect to campus sexual assault. If there are things this subcommittee wants to be put forward the Governor is open to that suggestion. The committee won’t be able to control what’s being put forth from legislators.

Dr. Cabrera said the only way to control policy is to lay out concrete things we want to do and to step up our own actions.

Ms. Bradford reminded the committee that you can’t legislate prevention.

There was discussion about when the committees present reports and next steps.

Ms. Renda listed the major themes that had been discussed. Three subgroups were selected to work on overarching topics. There was discussion about the topics and the scope of what the subcommittee is tasked

with as well as discussion about the reach of our expertise in relation to K-12 and the issue of alcohol and drugs on campuses. Secretary Holton encouraged the committee to look at the issue that alcohol plays in the sexual assaults. The suggestion was made by the Secretary that the committee use a future meeting to learn more about the topic as we did in our last meeting on prevention. The committee agreed.

The three subgroups that the committee created are as follows:

- 1- Climate Surveys- Ángel Cabrera, Leah Cox, Fran Bradford. Staff: Kay Heidbreder
 - a. Social normalizing
 - b. How to use Data
 - c. Statewide question set
 - d. What mobile applications are campuses using?
- 2- Evidence-based Prevention strategies/ programs –Frank Shushok, Tom Kramer, Christopher Ndiritu, Dorothy Edwards Staff: Secretary Holton, Lisa Furr
 - a. Populations
 - b. Timing of education
 - c. Specific outreach strategies
 - d. Healthy relationships
 - e. Apps being used for prevention
 - f. Bystander intervention
- 3- Intersectional Issues: Brandon Day, Kristi Van Audenhove, Emily Renda. Staff: Mary Vail Ware, Dr. Trent
 - a. K-12
 - b. Alcohol
 - c. Hazing
 - d. Healthy relationships
 - e. Gender roles

The committee then divided into groups and worked on the designated topics.

Group I - Climate Survey

Members: Cabrera, Cox, Bradford

Notes Taken By: Kay Heidbreder

Angel Cabrera volunteered to chair Group I.

Dr. Cabrera recommended that the White House Report be used as a basis for developing a climate survey for the Virginia institutions of higher education. The group recommended that there be a common set of questions for all schools, with the institutions having the ability to customize the questions based on the specific needs of the school.

Dr. Cabrera recommended, and the group agreed on the following steps:

1. At the Taskforce meeting on January 8, 2015, the Prevention Committee should recommend that a shared climate survey be adopted.
2. To start the process of developing questions, Dr. Cabrera, in his role as the chair of the sexual assault working group of the Council of Presidents, sent an email to co-presidents requesting that the institutions provide suggested names from their respective offices of Institutional Research, Student Affairs, and/or Title IX Coordinators, who may have knowledge on developing a climate survey. The co-presidents have been asked to send names of individuals to Mary Vail Ware.
3. Under Dr. Cabrera's leadership, select individuals from the names supplied by the co-presidents, will develop a set of climate survey questions using existing surveys from such institutions as Rutgers, Michigan, or any Virginia schools and the guidance provided in the White House Report.
4. The draft climate survey will be piloted with one or two schools in the spring.
5. If the information obtained from the survey is useful, the survey will be presented by the Prevention Subcommittee as a recommended set of core questions for all institutions of higher education in Virginia, with the understanding that the survey will need some customization to account for differences in colleges and universities, such as the presence of Greek Life on campus, residence halls, military programs, etc.

Group 2-Evidence Based Prevention Strategies: Discussion focused on mobile applications being used around campus and what is available. Tom Kramer wondered how to get this conversation out to the "average" person on campus. Chris Ndiritu said he finds students to be very ill informed on how to connect and conversation turned to how to re-engage campuses in this discussion.

The group agreed upon four tasks:

- 1- The types of relevant applications being used
 - a. Mr. Kramer will check with campuses and obtain a list of what is available
 - b. Secretary Holton will check with Live Safe and get their data
- 2- Dorothy Edwards will share a framework on bystander principles
- 3- The group will suggest that there be a statewide initiative developing a message to invite people to re-engage and reconsider the role of prevention.
- 4- The group will explore the role alcohol can play in the ability of individuals to prevent sexual assaults.

Group 3-Intersectional Issues: Brandon Day, Kristi VanAudenhove, Emily Renda Staff: Mary Vail Ware, Dr. Trent

Group 3 looked at intersectional issues with respect to campus sexual violence. These issues included: hazing, alcohol and drug use, K-12 prevention efforts, and the promotion of healthy relationships. The discussion is outlined by topic below:

Hazing: The committee will look at the SHEV's recommendations on model hazing policy and will determine if the policy and training efforts link the acceptance of this type of violence to other types of violence.

Alcohol and Drug Use: The group agreed that the sub-committee needs more data about this issue's relationship to sexual violence. The group also agreed that it needs data about whether some efforts like hiring security and independent bar tenders at parties reduce the incident of sexual violence. There

was concern that focusing on this issue in tandem with sexual assault might obfuscate the fact that alcohol can be a predatory tool that can create a vulnerability used by others to violent or abusive ends.

K-12: While no one on the sub-committee is a K-12 expert, there is a thought that K-12 prevention efforts should include some information on sexual harassment, by-stander intervention and perhaps be a bit more expansive on existing bullying curriculum with relationship to those topics. Dr. Trent agreed to liaison with the Department of Education's task group on Standards of Learning (SOL) about their plans to include sexual assault prevention in their review.

Healthy Relationships: As part of prevention work it is important to discuss gender norms and roles, inclusivity and diversity. The committee discussed this becoming part of all prevention efforts across K-12 and higher education. Ms. Renda also suggested that faculty be encouraged to develop course work on this topic.

Overarching all of these ideas was a recommendation that all campus prevention efforts be coordinated via a joint prevention committee so that all individuals that conduct prevention activities (hazing, sexual assault, alcohol and drug use) address some common themes: respect, empathy, acceptable behavior, etc. A committee like this could be a force multiplier on campus for all prevention efforts. There was also a suggestion that the scope of Title IX be transmitted to everyone on campus from administration, to faculty and support staff to students.

As there was no one present for public comment the committee continued its work.

Dr. Cabrera reported that his group would like to ask the subcommittee's opinion about his sending out an email to the other campus presidents about each president selecting a member of their community who was an expert about sexual violence research or the title IX coordinator to come together to discuss the climate surveys being used. The committee approved and he sent the email.

Lisa Furr reminded the committee that she will be out on medical leave and that Mary Vail Ware from the OAG will be covering for her.

Ms. Renda will send out a doodle poll for the February group meeting and gather the sub group's action items to send out to the committee.

With no further items the Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:05 pm. The next meeting will be the meeting of the full Task Force on January 8th.